Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 20, line 6 with the following rewritten sentence:

As described in further detail below, the device 10 also includes a number of temperature or heat sensors (320) to maintain consistency throughout the operation of the device. These sensors 320 may be infrared sensors, such as thermopile infrared sensors. However, other sensors such as thermal couplers or thermistors may be employed. The sensors 320 are used, for example, during the connection and disconnection processes. The sensors verify the tubing is heating properly and may be calibrated to indicate a level of heat is reached for a "good weld" or "bad weld." For example, in applications where the tubing includes a dye, the heat is absorbed by the dye and, in turn, the tubing begins to ~~meit~~ melt and flow. In this way, the sensors are non-contact temperature sensors that correspond to the infrared output of the tubing as the tubing absorbs the energy from the laser.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 20, line 27 with the following rewritten sentence:

The method of connecting two tube ends will now be described. During the connection process, the lid 24 is closed. As shown in Figures 1, ~~2A,~~2A, ~~and~~ 4A and 4B, the user inserts two tubes 50, each having a sealed end 51, into the device 10 via the loading area openings 30, 32, 38, 40. However, it is within the scope of the invention to use at least one tube end 51 that is not sealed, but, open. In applications involving an open tube end, several types of end caps may be used to maintain the necessary sanitation levels at the inside of the tube. One type of end cap may be a sealed "drum head" that covers the end of the tube. The sealed "drum head" may be a piece of film placed over the open end of the tube and sealed around the entire face of the tube. Another example may include an open end with a vented seal over the face of the tube. A vented seal may be, for example, a perforated membrane. In this example, an end cap would be added to cover the vented end for sanitation purposes.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 21, line 19 with the following rewritten sentence:

In ~~Figures~~Figure 4C, the reflective prism 206 is between the tube holders 70, 72 After each tube end 51 is loaded into its respective tube holder 70, 72, the laser unit 200 is activated and energy diverges from the laser source. The collimator 204 refocuses the diverging energy toward the prism lens 206. As the energy/light strikes the reflective prism 206 it reflects into two bundles of energy. In this embodiment, the prism lenses 210, 212 re-direct each bundle of energy at approximately a 90 degree angle to focus the energy around the tube ends 51. More particularly, a "spot" of energy strikes the tube ends 51 and preferably, slightly exceeds the diameter B of the tube 50 to ensure the tube is covered with adequate radiant energy.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 26, line 12 with the following rewritten sentence:

Figure 7 illustrates another embodiment of the invention in which the prism 206 and light pipe 220 are not between the tube holders 70, 72 but located near the front 14 of the housing 12. For simplification purposes, Figure ~~6~~ 7 shows the anvil 112 between the collimator 204 and the prism 206. However, during the connection process, the anvil 112 is generally not employed. Instead, the anvil 112 is off to one side 18 or 20 in the housing 12. During the disconnection process, the anvil 112 moves in front of the laser 200. Thus, the anvil 112 may be mounted on a tracking system similar to that described above with respect to the collimator 204.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 26, line 20 with the following rewritten sentence:

During the connection process, the prism lens 206 diffuses the laser beam and spreads the energy over a slightly larger area than that described above in Figures 4A through 4H. In this example, the lenses 210, 212 are shown with flat reflecting surfaces 210a, 212a. However, it should be understood that the lenses 210, 212 may be concave or some other configuration depending on the laser type and the need to redirect and focus the beam. Also, the prism 206

may be rough edged lenses 210, 212 to spread the energy at the surface of the sealed tube ends 51. Moreover, another lens (now shown) may be positioned at the surfaces 210a, 212a between the surface and the tubing to further focus the laser beam. As described above with respect to the embodiment in Figures 2A and 2B, the tube ends are brought together after the tube ends are sufficiently heated and a weld is formed. However, the embodiment of Figure ~~6~~ 7 is less complex because it is not necessary to move the prism 206 from in between the tube ends prior to bringing the tube ends together.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 27, line 20 with the following rewritten sentence:

In addition, a fiber optic member 432, 434 extends perpendicular from each side 414, 416 of the lens 412. During the connection process, the laser unit 200 is energized and the laser beam is directed down the fixed lens 412 to the fiber optic members 432, 434. The fiber optic members 432, 434 emit the laser energy at the tube ends ~~50~~ 51. Similar to the embodiment described in Figures 2A and 2B above, the assembly 410 moves out from between the tube holders 70, 72 and the tube holders bring the tube ends together to form a weld. If necessary, the laser unit 200 can be energized again and the laser beam is directed down the fixed lens 412 to the area where the tube ends are joined to form a weld.